

**Written Testimony of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society
SB 983, AA Limiting Anticompetitive Health Care Practices
Insurance and Real Estate Committee – Tuesday, February 21, 2023**

Senator Cabrera, Representative Wood, and distinguished Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, on behalf of the more than 240 orthopaedic surgeons of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society (COS), thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony opposing **SB 983, AA Limiting Anticompetitive Health Care Practices**

The orthopaedic community strongly opposes Section 3(b) and 3 (c) of SB 983, AA Limiting Anticompetitive Health Care Practices, the Governor's Bill which would gut Connecticut's statute governing surprise billing ([CGS § 38a-477aa\(b\)](#)) and the protections that have been serving our patients, Connecticut's residents, since its enactment in 2016.

While the reference in the Governor's Fact sheet (SB 983) indicating price gouging as being the impetus behind the bill, for the last eight years, Connecticut's surprise billing law prevents unfair pricing, ensures patients have access to timely and quality care in emergency situations and contains provisions for the out-of-network physician treating the patient to receive reimbursement for the care they provide.

It is understandable that the profitable health insurance companies would prefer to minimize their reimbursement costs and administrative requirements in adhering to the fair and impartial surprise billing provisions currently in State statute; however, patient access to care should take precedence over insurers and their shareholders.

Limiting out-of-network reimbursement to 100% of Medicare will have a negative impact on patient care if independent physicians no longer provide services in the emergency room for out-of-network care. Connecticut's no surprise bill coupled with additional protections found in the federal "No Surprises Act" offer patients and physicians a comprehensive and fair solution to surprise billing in Connecticut.

In addition to enhancing the profits of the health insurance industry, this bill, if enacted, will also provide the industry with even more contracting power over the independent physician community.

The orthopaedic community of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society urges members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee to oppose the section of the bill referenced above to ensure patients continue to receive access to timely care in emergency situations and physicians receive fair reimbursement for the treatment and care they provide.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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